

Foreword

From 21 to 24 September 2003, the sunny skies of San Diego, California, beckoned 183 delegates from 19 countries to the 16th International Ion Chromatography Symposium (IICS'03).

On Sunday, 21 September, several hearty and conscientious delegates opted for science over sightseeing. They attended one of two all-day short courses: Ion analysis by capillary electrophoresis and capillary electrochromatography (presented by Paul Haddad, University of Tasmania, Tasmania, Australia) or Statistics for analytical chemists (by Lynn Vanatta, Air Liquide-Balazs™ Analytical Services, Dallas, TX, USA). That evening, all conferees gathered for the opening reception, whose location included a veranda overlooking the bay area.

The scientific program began in earnest on Monday morning. The opening session featured the keynote lecture by Frantisek Svec (University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA) and the Achievement Award lecture by Joachim Weiss (Dionex, Idstein, Germany). Dr. Svec discussed the use of monolithic columns. He first reviewed the advantages of such separators (e.g., ease of preparation, ruggedness, speed of separations). Subsequently, he discussed polymerization techniques (both thermal- and photo-initiation) and the use of grafting procedures to control surface chemistry. Example applications were peptides and proteins. Dr. Weiss was selected for the 2003 Ion Chromatography Achievement Award, in recognition of his many contributions to the field. He reviewed his work with polyphosphates, polyphosphonates, polyphosphinates, aminopolyphosphonic acids and aminopolycarboxylic acids. Detection methods ranged from those requiring post-column derivatization (UV and phosphorus-specific) to conductivity to mass spectrometry.

This session closed with the recognition of the Student Award recipient, who received a travel stipend to facilitate his presenting his research at IICS'03. This year's awardee was Joe Hutchinson (University of Tasmania).

Concurrent parallel sessions were held throughout the rest of the meeting. Topics were: (1) regulatory environmental applications of ion-chromatography, (2) ion-chromatography applications, (3) column selectivity, (4) biological analysis by ion-exchange chromatography (organized by Jeff Rohrer, Dionex, Sunnyvale, CA, USA), (5) advances

in ion chromatography, (6) ion-chromatographic measurement methods for perchlorate (organized by Doug Later, Dionex), (7) system-optimization discussion forum (organized by Lynn Vanatta), (8) ion chromatography with mass spectrometry (organized by Art Fitchett, Dionex), (9) capillary-electrophoresis methodologies for ion analysis and (10) semiconductors and pure chemicals (organized by Lynn Vanatta).

Following the lectures each day, two 2-h workshops were offered. In an informal, question-and-answer-type atmosphere, participants were given practical advice on: (1) bio ion-exchange (presented by Jeff Rohrer), (2) electrolytic devices (Ruthann Kiser, Yan Liu and Kannan Srinivasan, Dionex), (3) method development and column selection (Chris Pohl, Dionex), (4) new developments in ion analysis (Paul Haddad), (5) sample-preparation and sample-handling techniques (Rosanne Slingsby, Dionex, and Lynn Vanatta) and (6) troubleshooting (Service Team, Dionex).

Poster sessions were held late in the afternoon on Monday and Tuesday. The presentations were displayed for the entirety of both days, thereby allowing everyone to view the research at his or her leisure. Authors were assigned to be with their poster at one of the two sessions. The inclusion of refreshments allowed participants to mix business with pleasure.

The weather cooperated beautifully throughout the symposium, meaning that all meals could be held outside. Dionex Corporation generously sponsored a luau dinner (with live-music entertainment) on Monday evening. Thus, attendees had many opportunities to socialize and renew/make new contacts.

Our thanks goes out to our fellow members on the Scientific Committee: (1) Becky Adams (Dow Chemical Company, Freeport, TX, USA), (2) James Fritz (Iowa State University, Ames, IA, USA), (3) Charles Lucy (University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada), (4) Shi-Fen Mou (Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences, Beijing, China) and (5) Chris Pohl.

A very special thank you goes to Janet Cunningham (Barr Enterprises, Walkersville, MD, USA), the Symposium Manager, and to Angie Jinks (Dionex). Between the two of them, they patiently and skillfully (and almost silently!) arranged for the details of the meeting. A debt of gratitude

also goes to Shannon Cunningham (Barr Enterprises) for assisting Janet and Angie with the registration-table duties in San Diego. Calmly and graciously, these three women kept the symposium running smoothly and on schedule, as well as solved the unexpected (but inevitable!) problems. Without their energy, professionalism and concern, the meeting would not have progressed efficiently.

Above all, we thank the delegates who came to present, to learn and to interact with each other. They participated fully in all of the scheduled events, graciously tolerating long days and three concurrent sessions on some occasions (all of which were necessary to accommodate every presentation in 2.5 days). Interaction among the attendees was

extremely high, not only during the scientific program but also during “down” time; for example, early each morning, groups of participants could be found walking or jogging along the beach. Our hope is that everyone went home having learned much of value and having renewed/made new friendships. We also invite all interested chromatographers to IICS'04, which will be held from 20 to 23 September 2004 in Trier, Germany. Co-Program Chairmen are Joachim Weiss and Lynn Vanatta. Details will be available on the Web site: www.icsymposium.com.

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